



Office of Innovative School Models
 Persistently Lowest Achieving (PLA) Schools
 School Improvement Grant (SIG)
 Monitoring Report

School:	Chelsea Career and Technical Education High School	School District:	New York City Department of Education District #2
Date of Site-Visit:	April 27, 2011 (Second Visit)	Members of Site-Visit Team:	Kathryn Ahern, Major Capers, Andrew McGrath

STAFFING	
Collective Bargaining	<i>Negotiations are continuing regarding revision of the collective bargaining agreement in order to support development of a teacher evaluation system, removal of staff based on the evaluation system and changes in workday, duties and hours.</i>
Teacher Evaluations linked to Student Performance	<i>Teacher evaluations linked to student performance have been put into place. The system and data used must be consistent with State APPR system.</i>
Identify and Reward staff or Remediate/Remove Staff	<i>A clear and transparent process for identifying staff for rewards and remediation is in place (a process must be in place immediately upon the development and implementation of the Teacher Evaluation System).</i>
Implementation of Strategies to Recruit, Place, and Retain Qualified Staff	<i>Activities are funded to recruit, place, and/or retain highly qualified teachers.</i>

Findings:

- The teacher effectiveness rubric is based loosely on the Danielson model. It was developed by the New York City Department of Education (NYCDoE), United Federation of Teachers (UFT) and the teacher effectiveness committee. The fourth domain - Professional Responsibilities – was still under negotiation with the teachers’ union at the time of the site visit.
- The district level positions have been filled since the last monitoring visit. The following positions are now fully staffed:
 - School Improvement Liaison (SIL),
 - Director for Partnership Development and Capacity Building,
 - Director for Pipeline Development,
 - Associate Director for Pipeline Development,
 - Associate for Business Operations, and
 - Analyst/Administrative support.
- In their focus group session, school leaders stated the school implemented a new teacher effectiveness rubric in early February 2011. Information gathered from observations is entered into a database/tracker. The tracker allows the

principal and assistant principals to input and analyze qualitative data on observations.

- School leaders stated all teachers have received at least one informal observation, and most have had two or three informal observations. All formal observations have been conducted or scheduled. Teachers were only being rated on pedagogy during the 2010-11 school year. The school plans to use student growth and student performance in teacher evaluations starting in September 2011.
- Merit bonuses or remediation processes linked to the teacher evaluations were not yet in place.
- School leaders were involved in the selection process for the school's master teachers. One master teacher was hired for the 2010-11 school year. A second master teacher position was decline, as school leaders felt the pool of applicants did not match the needs of the school.

PLANNING	
Implementation of Timeline	<i>The district/school is on track to complete activities in accordance with the approved timeline for implementation, or to submit an approvable School Improvement Grant (SIG) application. Identify elements that are off-track.</i>
Performance Targets	<i>The district/school is implementing activities which will help them meet the school's performance targets. (Performance targets are tied to the school's achieving "In Good Standing" by the end of the 3 year grant period. Refer to the school's Performance Plan Template, as available.)</i>
Implementation of JIT Recommendations	<i>The district and school are implementing the plan based on the JIT recommendations. The recommendations of the JIT are addressed as delineated in the SIG application or Restructuring Plan, as applicable.</i>

Findings:

- The SIL was hired at the end of March.
- School leaders stated the school has received three laptop computer carts, as delineated in the amended fiscal statement.
- According to the network leader, SIG funding was made available to the school in February 2011. As a result, the school used local funds to initiate much of the work delineated in its original improvement plan. An amended draft budget was presented to the site visit team, along with a corresponding budget narrative. School leaders and the network team stated they were not aware of the current approval status of the amended budget.
- The school received a Quality Review by NYCDoE in March 2011. Feedback found within this report was used in developing the 2011-12 school improvement plan.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT	
Quality, On-going, Job-embedded Professional Development	<i>Implementing job-embedded professional development, as defined by the USED, and as approved by NYSED.</i>
Supportive of Instructional Needs	<i>All professional development is researched based and supportive of the instructional needs of the school.</i>
Monitoring and Analysis	<i>Professional development is monitored and analyzed to ensure staff participation and classroom implementation.</i>

Findings:

- The school continues its vendor/partner relationships with EPIC Theater, Heart of Change, The Door, Teaching Matters and Children First Network (CFN) 107.
- The Heart of Change consultants have continued their support in facilitating holistic change in the school with a learning conference devoted to differentiating instruction.
- Teachers stated consultants working with the school have narrowed down the professional development to focus areas based on the needs of the school and staff.
- During their focus group session, teachers indicated there has been an infusion of professional development. Examples cited were differentiated instruction, instructional strategies and visual thinking.
- The school continues to use the Performance Based Task Assessments for English language arts (ELA), math and science as part of the ninth grade ELA, math and science courses. The data gathered from these assessments is used to devise differentiated classroom activities and revise instruction.

DATA ANALYSIS	
Data to Inform Instructional Programming	<i>Data is used to identify and implement research-based instructional programs that are aligned with state standards</i>
Data for Instructional Decisions for Student Achievement	<i>A system is being implemented which allows for the continuous use of data to make instructional decisions for students.</i>

Findings:

- During their focus group session, school leaders stated weekly grade level meetings and department meetings are held to analyze student data and to plan lessons collaboratively.
- During their focus group session, school leaders stated Teaching Matters has worked extensively with the teachers and administrators to develop and analyze Performance-Based Task assessments. Additionally, they have developed and implemented a rubric for school innovation.
- According to teachers and leaders, the Performance-Based Task writing assessments are given to the entire school three times during the year (fall, winter and spring). These normed assessments were developed by teachers and assistant principals. Scoring rubrics were developed by the staff as well. Results of the assessments are used to assist in grouping, and are used to make instructional decisions.
- Teachers stated they have working with Teaching Matters to track Acuity data, formative assessments, benchmark writing assessments, data across the curriculum, attendance trends and student data.
- The career and technical education (CTE) classrooms for math and science found through an analysis of the data that there was a greater need to incorporate more inquiry and to facilitate technical writing skills.
- A team of eleventh grade teachers studied the lowest achieving one-third of the class. The result of this inquiry was to work with these students to create “smart goals,” or individualized achievement programs. The students have become empowered to manage and monitor their progress toward achieving a Regents’ diploma.

CURRICULUM AND TEACHING	
Increased Learning Time	<i>The school has implemented a longer school day, week, or school year to significantly increase the total number of school hours to provide additional time for instruction in core academic subjects, or in enrichment subject areas, or added time for teacher collaboration.</i>
Mapped and Paced Curriculum	<i>The written district/school level curriculum is aligned to NYS standards, performance indicators, the core competencies and is being implemented. Pacing guides are developed, used and monitored.</i>
Instructional Programming is Linked to Needs Assessment	<i>Curricular decisions have been made to meet the needs of all students.</i>
Effective Teaching	<i>There is evidence of rigor, relevance, pacing, and alignment of curriculum to State Standards, and student engagement from Highly Qualified Teachers (HQT).</i>
ELL/SWD	<i>The necessary instructional programs and highly qualified staff are in place to support the needs of English Language Learners (ELL) and students with disabilities (SWD).</i>

Findings:

- School leaders stated teacher lesson planning includes components from the teacher effectiveness rubric. Examples include writing in content areas and CTE classes and incorporating common core standards into classroom instruction.
- The global history courses now include more performance based writing tasks for students preparing for the Regents' exam, based on teachers' study of student performance on interim assessment outcomes.
- Consultants from Teaching Matters work with teachers on a one-to-one basis to improve and personalize the quality of instruction with technology such as the interactive white boards in both math and writing activities.
- The site visit team observed students and teachers actively engaged in academic dialogue. Teachers asked probing questions and encouraged students to extend their written and oral responses.

STUDENT SUPPORT	
Additional Support	<i>Students are receiving extra academic and developmental support based on student need (AIS, character development, PBIS).</i>
Counseling	<i>Student support services are in place to provide students in need with additional social support (education/career counseling, social work, drug/alcohol/violence counseling, school psychologist, health/mental health professional)</i>
Enrichment Opportunities	<i>Students have opportunities to participate in academic and social enrichment activities during and after the school day and during the summer.</i>

Findings:

- School leaders stated the school contracted EPIC to extend the school arts program beyond the current class schedule. EPIC representatives collaborate with classroom teachers and students to develop plays and presentations that are performed at the school and in nearby theaters.
- The Door, along with the NYCDoe provides support for an attendance officer to work with students and their families to find solutions for chronic absences and tardiness issues. An incentive program with gift cards for longer-term improved attendance has been instituted and is well received by students.
- The *iZone* program is in use for credit recovery, with regular daily attendance at 50 to 60 students using the 64 licenses available to the school. The school

leadership team reported that students have used the program to recover from four to 38 credits per individual.

- Students do not currently have a dedicated study area or library facility for personal study or research in the building at this time. There is also no gym, auditorium or other large multi-purpose room available for student and faculty use at this time.
- In spite of these facility restrictions the school has manages to support a variety of special interest clubs, sports and musical theater activities after school. The after school credit recovery programs are perceived as highly valuable by the students, with students reporting that “nearly everyone stays” on a daily basis during the dedicated time from 3:15 to 4:05 pm.

TRANSFORMATIONAL SCHOOL LEADERSHIP	
Effective Leadership	<i>The school leader has the experience and skills needed to successfully implement a turnaround model and to act as a change agent for the school.</i>
Leadership Development	<i>School leaders receive appropriate and timely professional development. Mentoring or coaching programs are in place and effective.</i>
School Improvement Manager/External Providers	<i>The school is being guided and informed by its partnership with its School Improvement Manager or external provider.</i>
Building Level Leadership Team	<i>The school is utilizing its Building Leadership Team to implement the intervention model.</i>

Findings:

- The principal, along with the assistant principal for math and science and the assistant principal for literacy and the humanities have forged a strong collaboration with teachers and students to continue to focus on the development of a strong, supportive and viable learning community.
- The SIL was hired recently and was able to make her first visit to the school to join the NYSED monitoring team during the visit.

SCHOOL CLIMATE AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT	
Environment is Conducive to Learning	<i>The school is safe, orderly and academically-oriented. Supervision is sufficient, respectful and consistent.</i>
Shared Vision	<i>School staff understands the focus/ vision of the school’s improvement efforts and supports them in a consistent and effective manner.</i>
Collaboration	<i>Administrators, teachers and staff communicate openly, positively and effectively. Professional learning communities exist and affect improvement efforts.</i>
Parent Involvement	<i>Strategies are being implemented to increase the involvement and contributions of parents.</i>
External/Community-Based Partners	<i>Strategies are being implemented to increase the involvement and contributions of community partners.</i>

Findings:

- The monitoring visit occurred on the first day back from Spring Break; nonetheless, the general atmosphere in the school was one of energy, enthusiasm and a distinct focus on academic endeavor.
- Representatives from Teaching Matters stated they are working with English language arts (ELA) and social studies staff to bring technology into daily instructional practices.

- Parents and students report that *EdLine* is a popular way to keep them in touch with school since students live in neighborhoods from all over the five boroughs and must travel a considerable distance to attend the school.

OTHER FUNDING SOURCES	
Use of 1003(g) or 1003(a) grant funding	<i>The LEA is using School Improvement Grant (SIG) funding to support the implementation of or planning for school intervention models.</i>
Use of Other Funding Sources besides 1003 (g)	<i>In addition to SIG 1003(g) and/or 1003(a) funds, the LEA is using a number of other resources to implement the school intervention models or the Restructuring Plan, as applicable.</i>

Findings:

- Title I funds are used to augment the school's arts program. The theater program developed by EPIC provides enrichment opportunities for students during the school day and after school.
- The school received a \$250,000 United Way grant for the Graduate, Prepare, Succeed (GPS) program that provides attendance improvement and dropout prevention services for students at risk of dropping out.

DISTRICT SUPPORT AND PLANNING FOR DEVELOPMENT	
District Support Provides Operational Flexibility to the School	<i>The LEA provides or is planning to provide the school operational flexibility (such as matters staffing, calendars/time, and budgeting).</i>
District has a systemic plan for intervention and improvement	<i>The LEA has incorporated all JIT recommendations and requirements of the SIG Application into the improvement plan for the school.</i>
District has a plan to identify, recruit, place, and retain effective leadership	<i>In accordance with SIG requirements, the LEA has a plan for hiring and retaining leadership.</i>

Findings:

- Network and district representatives have also been working with staff from the eleven NYCDoe transformation schools, providing professional development for teacher effectiveness evaluations. The schools have been meeting together for mutual support, school improvement planning, and student assessment training.
- The teacher effectiveness committee began initial work in October, and has been heavily involved in the year two planning of the SIG.
- As previously mentioned, the school received a Quality Review by NYCDoe in April 2011. Information contained within was used in developing the 2011-12 school improvement plan.

Summary:

The State Education Department three-member site visit team conducted a full-day site visit at Chelsea Career and Technical Education High School on April 27, 2011. Although the visit was brief, the team was able to acquire information about the school's efforts to implement their reform model for improving student learning.

The site visit team met with various stakeholders and reviewed initiatives that appear to provide the school with the opportunity to make progress towards improved student achievement. The school leadership team is visible, innovative and supportive; and the network is actively involved in the school improvement efforts. Numerous external partners are working collaboratively with the school, and the teaching staff is proactive and student-centered.

Staff, students, parents and educational partners all spoke positively of the school's efforts to improve student achievement. District and school representatives were candid with their comments and highly cooperative throughout the PLA monitoring process. The school and the district appear to be working together to coordinate their efforts and implement as much of their Transformation Model as possible.

The next site visit to Chelsea Career and Technical Education High School will be during the Fall of 2011.